1: Titiev E-5 (1948) 1951 SG4 Araucanians SG4
Mapuche-Huilliche

kul·on). Abortions are rarely sought, however, even among unmarried women, and are ordinarily performed only in conjunction with an act of witchcraft known as *koftun*, the aim of which is to render a worthless lover impotent or sterile.

I was told of no current pregnancy tabus, but Cooper stated: "It was taboo for an expectant mother to stand on the threshold of the hut";[5] and Guevara said that pregnant women were not allowed to visit the sick, watch hockey games or races, or partake of certain foods lest they bear twins.[6] All sources agree that intercourse is not forbidden during the period of gestation.

If a mother of small youngsters finds herself with child, she is likely to prepare them for the coming event by saying that a bird appeared to her in a dream and promised to send the family a new baby for a playmate. She then asks the children to be good to the infant when it arrives. Conventionally, Araucanian children are supposed to be ignorant of the circumstances pertaining to childbirth, and they are not permitted to be present when a birth takes place.

PARTURITION

Unlike the custom of earlier days,[7] a contemporary mother is expected to bear her children within her own *ruka*, and some of the more sophisticated women even go to maternity hospitals in the cities. The process of childbearing is called *choyūin*. On the reservations when the time for delivery draws near, a section of the house is set apart, and no one may come there except those who are assigned to help the patient. Young children are particularly forbidden to approach or touch their mothers, and it is the common practice for all housemates who are not assisting with the case to absent themselves as soon as labor begins.

A parturient woman is usually attended by a midwife or a

[5] Cooper, 1946, p. 732.

[6] Guevara, 1911, p. 285.

[7] There is a sharp contrast between the childbirth customs reported by informants in 1948 and the harsh picture drawn in Latcham, 1909, pp. 359–60.

1: Titiev E-5 (1948) 1951 SG4 Araucanians SG4
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A parturient woman is usually attended by a midwife or a
[759] *machi*, her own husband, and, occasionally, one other man or
844 woman. She is given a sturdy stick and encouraged to hold it and to walk up and down as long as she can. During labor she takes draughts of water, sometimes mixed with ginger. When parturition is about to occur, the mother assumes a kneeling position on a sheepskin mat large enough to catch whatever matter may be discharged incidental to birth. If help is needed a strong man or woman may grasp the patient and press down on her abdomen. It is thought that particular care must be taken with women having their first babies to make sure that the child is guided through the proper orifice.

As soon as birth has taken place the attendant midwife or *machi* heats a special instrument, *katrüf dowe* ("umbilical cord cutter"), made of sharp metal, formerly of stone. With this instrument, which is reserved for this one use, she severs the cord, then ties the knot. Upon the expulsion of the afterbirth the husband is directed to gather up the sheepskin on which accouchement occurred, and to be sure that it contains every particle of solid and fluid substance that was shed at the confinement. Should anything have fallen to the ground, the husband carefully scrapes it up and puts it into the sheepskin. The mat and its contents are then secretly buried in a deep hole, dug in virgin soil at an unfrequented spot. A stone or a heavy piece of wood may be used as a weight to prevent animals from getting at the buried bundle. Secrecy is observed for fear of witches or of jealous people, such as lovers or women who may want the recently delivered mother for a daughter-in-law.

846 Soon after a delivery has been safely accomplished, all soiled garments and bedding are carefully laundered in a stream. Mother and child are bathed in a mixture of water and the fragrant leaves of plants such as *foye*,[8] *ifulkoñ*,[9] or *natruñ*.[10] Sometimes, if a daughter has just been born, the mother may

[8] *Foye* is the cinnamon tree which is called *canelo* in Spanish. It is very sacred to the Araucanians and is used in a wide range of religious contexts.

[9] Augusta (1916, I: 65) identified this plant as *Vestia lycioides*.

[10] Identified as *Solanum Gayanum* Remy, family Solaneaceae, in Augusta (*op. cit.*, p. 146).

4:Latcham F-5 (1888-1893) 1909 SG4 Araucanians SG4

provide the purchase price, and to maintain them and their families. Formerly it 595
was common for a chief of importance to have as many as twenty, but now the number rarely passes four or five. The first wife (*onen domuche*) has, however, a certain moral ascendency over the others (*mau domuche*). As a general rule there is little jealousy among the wives, who take it in turns, either daily or weekly, to attend to the personal wants of the husband, as also in sexual intercourse. It is [582]
probable that formerly exogamous customs prevailed, but at present the only
restrictions imposed are that a man may not marry his mother or sister. What 583
seems to indicate that exogamy was an ancient practice among these Indians, is the fact that all marriage ceremonies begin with the pretended rape, or carrying off of the bride, which of late years has given way to a simple elopement, unless the bride be unwilling, when the older custom is resorted to. The marriage ceremony consists of two parts; the rape (*leventun*), and the payment (*mavun*). Having arranged the price with the father or eldest brother of the girl, the bridegroom arranges the details of the rape. He calls together his male relations, and while one of them goes to the bride's house on some pretext or other, the rest make a sudden attack on the dwelling. This is energetically resisted by all the womenfolk, the men of the household remaining passive spectators. One of the raiders seizes the struggling girl, and none too gently drags her to where the bridegroom is waiting on horseback. Placing her in front of him the latter gallops off to the wood. Here the pair remain for three days, food being taken to them by their friends. After this the bridegroom takes home his bride to the hut he has already prepared for her. This custom of carrying off the bride is only practised in the case of the first wife. A few days later comes the feast of the payment (*mavun*), to which all the relatives of both parties are invited. The price paid varies according to the status of the bride. If she is of superior rank, the payment sometimes reaches as high as ten or twelve animals, cows, mares, or sheep; an approximate value of about £12 to £14 sterling. A poor man obtains a wife of his own class at the cost of a few shillings. If a bridegroom cannot pay at once the whole of the price agreed upon, he lives with his father-in-law till the debt is cancelled. Generally he puts the whole of his relations under contribution, and, as this debt is considered one of honour, it is usually paid in a very short time. If it were not paid within a reasonable period, the father could recover his daughter. The husband could only refuse to pay when the wife died prematurely, and could demand the return of the value given if she abandoned her home.

Marital Customs.—It was a former custom not to permit a woman to give 844
birth to a child within the precincts of the village, as it was considered to cause infectious diseases. She was driven out, on beginning to feel the labour pains, and
retired to the banks of the nearest stream or lake. As soon as the child was born 846
the mother stepped into the water and performed the necessary ablutions, returning afterwards to a small hut constructed for the purpose near the *ruca*, which constituted her home. Here she remained a week attended by some

4:Latcham F-5 (1888-1893) 1909 SG4 Araucanians SG4

compassionate friend. At the end of this time she bathed again, and returned to her own home, where all her relations and friends were assembled to celebrate a feast in honour of the babe. These customs are at present considerably modified, and the birth takes place in the *ruca* itself. The mother takes up a kneeling posture during labour, holding on by a thong fastened to a post. She is attended by her friends, and a midwife (*elputrave*) assists at the birth. The men retire outside the hut and receive with laughter and coarse jokes the complaints of the sufferer and the cries of the newly born. After the birth both mother and babe are bathed.

The baptism and naming of the child take place shortly afterwards. Some friend of the father offers himself as godfather (*lacu*), and requests that the babe, if it be a boy, may bear his name, the celebration feast being at his expense. Among other presents he provides a sheep, with the blood of which crosses are made on the forehead and temples of the child. This is an innovation of Christian origin, and dates from the time of the Spanish occupation. In the neighbourhood of the towns and missions the children frequently receive a Christian baptism, and take as names the most common of the calendar, their father's name passing as a surname.

A man does not cohabit with his wife after childbirth till the child is weaned, which does not take place till it has cut all its teeth.

When a man dies his eldest son inherits his wives, together with his other property, and from that moment takes them to wife himself, save only his mother, who recovers her freedom and may marry again. If he leaves no son, his eldest brother inherits and acquires the same rights. Sometimes the wives are distributed among all the brothers of the deceased in order of priority of marriage, the first married to the eldest brother, etc., or they can recover their liberty on paying to the heir the price they cost.

Totemism.—Although totemism is not in vogue among this race at the present day, there is reason to suppose that it was so at no late period.

The probability of exogamous marriage customs having formerly existed has already been referred to.

The custom, at one time universal, of giving children the names of animals, birds, or inanimate objects seems to indicate that these names might have belonged to the clan totem, especially as even recently it was no uncommon thing to find numerous persons in the same family group with the same name, only modified by some distinguishing adjective, as *Nahuel*, tiger; *Nahuelcolu*, red tiger; *Nahuetripai*, leaping tiger; *Luan*, huanaco; *Mariluan*, ten huanacos; *Loncoluan*, huanaco's head; *Vilu*, snake; *Quilavilu*, three snakes; *Coluvilu*, red snake, etc., etc. These names have gradually changed into surnames, owing to the custom of giving the children other names at baptism.

The Araucanos believe they originally descended from the animals whose names they bear, but have no clear idea as to whether this descent was on their mother's or on their father's side, although most of them incline to the former.

5:Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SG4 Araucanians SG4

728 of the same. The usual speeches were made and agreements concurred in. A white llama was killed, and each headman present consumed a bit of the heart while the canelos were anointed with the blood of the llama. A hole was dug in the ground and therein were buried arrows, tokis, and other instruments of war. The hole was then filled up and a canelo planted over it.

CANNIBALISM

266 From the accounts left us by González de Nájera (1889, pp. 54, 56), Bascuñan (1863, p. 43), Rosales (1877–78, 1:125), and others, there can be no reasonable doubt that a certain amount of cannibalism in connection with the killing of war prisoners was practiced by the *Araucanians*. As to the purpose, our sources are not clear; magical acquisition of power does not seem indicated. In some cases the captors cut flesh off the living captive, broiled it, and ate it; in other cases they burnt the bones of captives, reduced them to powder, and drank the powder mixed with lime; in still other cases the more common custom, the heart of the captive was cut out, sucked, and bitten into by the headmen and sometimes by others as well, or was cut up into small bits and each ate a bit—as was the common custom with the hearts of sacrificed animals.

Some of our early sources—Oña (canto 2, 1917, p. 86), Fernández (1611, cited by Medina, 1882, p. 217) and Molina (1878 a, p. 253; 1901, p. 165)—mention human sacrifice proper among the *Araucanians*, but without giving convincing evidence or details. There is a greater probability that it did not occur. (For summary and discussion of evidence, cf. McClafferty, 1932, pp. 27–29.)

LIFE CYCLE

•844 **Birth.**—It was taboo for an expectant mother to stand on the threshold of the hut. To give birth within the family hut was thought to bring evil upon the inmates. When travail began, the woman, accompanied by a relative or friend as midwife, retired to a temporary shelter near a stream or the sea. Delivery was in kneeling position. Midwives showed considerable skill in cases of difficult delivery, and practiced cephalotomy when they thought it indicated (Claude Joseph, 1933–34, p. 713). The umbilical cord was ordinarily cut with a flint knife (Latcham, 1922 b, p. 561). Various plant medicines were used to facilitate delivery; also, recently at least, a decoction of *Datura stramonium* to deaden the pains; and during and for a while after delivery, the mother took no cold drink (Gusinde, 1936, pp. 561, 855, and passim).

846 The mother bathed the infant and herself in a stream or in the sea right after birth. After remaining in seclusion 8 days, or in some cases less, she returned with the child for the naming feast. At this

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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262 In Alepúe area, also, a pregnant woman must not eat apples, honey,
843 or chili; not at any time are she and her husband to eat the double
184 yolk of an egg, for "it will make them the parents of twins." Cañaripe informants were interested and amazed to know that Araucanians in Alepúe area had the above beliefs. "We have no such beliefs here and I have no faith in them," said one. "I know, for instance, that I have eaten two yolks of one egg, and so has my husband, and we have no twins."

843 A pregnant woman must not look about too much, for she may happen to see something that will frighten her and may cause her to have an abortion or a premature delivery. An expectant mother will have a difficult delivery if she lifts the cover off a boiling kettle or places it on one. The unborn child will adhere to her uterus. She may, however, put prepared food into a kettle of boiling water and also stir boiling food. If no one else is around, she will ask even a small child to lift or replace the cover. She will also have a difficult delivery if she sits on anything made of wood, such as a bench, chair, or log—her child's head will grow out of proportion if she does. According to Cooper's sources she must not stand on the threshold of the ruka (1946, p. 732).

CHILDBIRTH, AND CARE OF MOTHER AND NEWBORN BABY

PLACE OF BIRTH, ATTENDANTS, PERSONS PRESENT, PROCEDURE, CELEBRATION, FUMIGATION, RECORDING THE BIRTH

●844 Birth is spoken of as "to have a baby" or "to have a new baby." Both Araucanian and non-Araucanian informants were certain that the child was always born in the home ruka and not in a temporary shelter. According to Cooper's sources (1946, p. 732), the woman retired to a temporary shelter near a stream or the sea when labor pains began; to give birth within the family ruka was thought to bring evil upon those who lived there.

Persons present at a birth are the woman's husband and children

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PLATE 1

Views of Araucanian country in Chile

133 241 797

1, Alepúe area: Burnt-over lands, plowed field at right, ruka with adjoining fenced-in garden and nearby fenced-in potato patch, grazing land, and wheat field; Río Mehuin and its valley in the distance, and the Pacific Ocean beyond. 2, Cañaripe area: Pasturelands of an Araucanian in the foreground, Catholic mission buildings in the distance, and the Andes in the background. 3, Panguipulli area, the western end of Lago Panguipulli in the Andes: Pasturelands in the foreground, Catholic mission, wheat fields on the hill at the right, and Volcano Shoshuenco in the distance. 4, Boroa area, looking north toward Río Cautín: Pasturelands, plowed hills, and river bottom.

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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and her mother. Usually a midwife is present also, and on occasion some of the woman's relatives and women friends. Any woman who is a nearby neighbor can always be relied on to assist, if needed. A machi is not present but is called in if the mother or child takes sick. 844

Until very recently, midwifery was practiced exclusively by women; at the time of the present study several middle-aged men in Alepúe area were doing so, one being assisted by his wife. "Both he and his wife were present last week when my sister's child was born. That man certainly knows how to deliver a baby!" A midwife is called datuchefe or domo kimdatukutranlu; there is no word for a male obstetrician, an indication that midwifery for men is not an old custom. [462]

To quote one of the men who assists at deliveries: "My part in helping is to examine the woman to make certain that the baby is in the right position, especially that the head is lying in the right position, for that is important. If it is, then all goes well and fast. When the first four of my children were born, I had a man deliver each—we call him a partero; we have no Mapuche name for such a man. I lost those four children; each died when about two months old. I watched that man deliver these children. Because these four died as infants, I delivered my wife myself of the next children. There were four more and they all lived." A Panguipulli woman was annoyed when asked if men assisted at deliveries: "What are you thinking about! It is always a woman who does so, a sensible woman, one who knows how!" Her husband interjected: "If a family is so poor that it cannot pay the midwife what she asks for a delivery, then the woman's husband will deliver his wife. Only then will any man help."

In some areas the midwife is paid for her services. In Alepúe she asks for 30 pesos (one U. S. dollar); if the woman is a relative, she accepts no pay. In Cofiaripe area the midwife receives no pay; her compensation is the privilege of calling each child that she delivers "my child." "And later on when the child is old enough to comprehend, its mother will say to it, if the midwife happens to come around, 'This is your mother.' This pleases the midwife; it is done in grateful recognition."

It is a custom for all members of a family to stay around home when anyone in the family is sick; it is for this reason that a woman's children are present when she gives birth to a child—their mother is thought of as being sick. Teachers related instances when a relative or a neighbor of a family requested that children be allowed to leave school and go home because there was sickness in their family. The day following, the children would tell of the birth of a brother or a

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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A 844 sister. Informants thought it would be cruel to send the children away from their mother while she is giving birth. Said a Coñaripe mother: "Strangers are not allowed at the birth. But most certainly all the children should be there, now when their mama is sick. She is never away from her family, and why should not all her children be there when she gives birth to one of their brothers or sisters? In any event, the baby is being born in their home. Where should they go?" Quoting a Panguipulli father, "Certainly, the children are all present at a birth. Where else should they go? They belong in the same ruka with their mother." All boys and girls in a school in Alepúe said they had been present at a birth, except ones who were too young when a birth occurred to remember it.

The expectant mother drinks a cooled herbal decoction of leaves, stems, and roots of culantrillo when she begins to have labor pains. This maintains good blood circulation. The ingredients are boiled for only a short time. Cooper notes that Gusinde gives a variety of medicinal plants used to facilitate birth (1946, p. 732).

According to an Alepúe woman the pains of labor can be lessened if the midwife pricks everyone present, including the children, with a needle. Hence, as soon as labor begins, she noted, people gathering in the house are pricked and they sing appropriate songs. After the baby is born, there is beating of drums and the people dance. Other informants said this was not the usual thing.

B [844] No informant had heard that letting a live lizard slide down the body of the expectant mother facilitated birth, something believed by the Blackfeet (from writer's unpublished field notes). No one knew of any animal associated with birth.

[278] Informants knew of no medicinal remedy to alleviate labor pains. Cooper mentions *Datura stramonium* as being used in recent times to deaden pain (1946, p. 732). "Sometimes the child comes soon; sometimes not for a long time, in which case the woman suffers much. We have no remedy for these pains. The mother must bear them. Labor pains usually begin at night, and by sunrise the baby is born. A child that is born at dawn or before the middle of the forenoon will be healthy and will grow to maturity. If it is born in the afternoon or evening, it usually dies—but births seldom occur at these times of the day."

Formerly women knelt while giving birth. This is in agreement with Cooper's sources also (1946, p. 732). Today most women kneel though an occasional one lies on her back. She kneels on something that can be discarded, such as a piece of threadbare homespun cloth or a worn-down sheep pelt. Generally she braces herself by gripping

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
SG4 Araucanians SG4
Chile

two upright poles that are driven into the ground about a foot apart. In Panguipulli area the woman not infrequently clutches a rope suspended from the rafters of the ruka. One of the women assisting her, usually the midwife, or any of those present—or the woman's husband, if no one else is present—kneels behind the woman, embraces her about the abdomen, and presses it with both hands. Sometimes a man's belt is tied about her waist and lowered with the progress of the delivery. After the child is born, its parents thank God that it has arrived and ask Him to help the child to continue to live and grow to maturity.

After delivery, "while the mother's body is still half sick," she is given a decoction made by boiling silvestre salvia, linaza, sanguinaria, and karül'awen, an aquatic plant. The mother has collected these from fields and open spaces and brooks before the birth of her child and has them ready for use. The midwife brings none with her. If the mother bleeds during delivery or afterward, she is given a decoction of ŋalauŋalau, a plant found in brooks.

Some midwives, "wise ones," know how to assist at difficult deliveries. According to Cooper's sources, they practiced cephalotomy when need was indicated (1946, p. 732). Quoting a Coñaripe informant: "If a child is not born within four days after labor pains begin and there is no wise midwife available, the mother usually dies. If the midwife is one who knows, she will boil flaxseed and lubricate her hand with the oil that comes to the surface. Before lubricating the hand, however, she cleans it well and cuts all fingernails of it close, except one, either the thumb or the first finger. Then she inserts her lubricated hand into the cervix, tears the sac with the one fingernail retained, and usually the baby is soon born." If all known means have been resorted to unsuccessfully, it is believed an evil spirit prevents the birth, and a machi is hired to perform a machitun. (Cf. pp. 115-121 for performances of machitun.)

During the present study an Araucanian midwife delivered a Chilean woman of one of a pair of twins. The other, not yet delivered, was thought, by Chilean women neighbors, to be dead. The midwife mixed water, vegetable oil, urine of those present, and ashes which she obtained by burning some of the woman's hair. Everyone present encouraged the woman to observe the midwife prepare the mixture. The woman drank two-thirds of a glassful of it, gagged violently, and gave birth to the twin, alive.

The baby's birth is not announced, nor is it celebrated by feast or ceremonial. Usually, however, a lamb or sheep is slaughtered and a

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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Chile

845 substantial meal prepared for the family and those who assisted at the birth. Neither mother nor child is fumigated.

The Chilean law obliges the father to record the birth of his child at a government office in the province in which the child is born.

STILLBIRTHS

"My fifth child was born dead. It was harvest time, and I believe I worked too hard in the fields and caused the baby to put itself into a wrong position, and that is why it was born dead. My seventh child was stillborn too. But why it was so born, I do not know. Maybe it would have lived if I had had the help of someone. When it was about to be born, there was no one at home except my little boy—he was only a baby himself. I had no one to send for help. I was so sick that I thought I must die. I cooked some flaxseed and drank a liter of it. Then the child was born; but it was dead. I have often thought that when children grow up they need to be told how much their mothers suffered giving them birth."

NAVEL CORD

● 844 In Coñaripe area the midwife or another woman present (the woman herself, if she is alone when the birth occurs) cuts the umbilical cord a handstretch from the navel. In Alepúe area the measure is three times the distance from tip of thumb to its first joint. The cord is cut with a knife—formerly one of flint.

The woman who cuts the cord drains the fluid from the section adhering to the navel (away from the navel) "until it [the cord] is as thin as a string," and then either coils it (clockwise) around the navel so that all of it will rest flat upon the baby's body, or piles it into a little heap alongside the navel. Then she covers it with a small wad of wool and puts on top of this a paste made of leaves. In Alepúe area the cord is generally greased to keep it from sticking to the body. Very recently several women had used commercial talcum powder in place of grease. All is kept in position by a band, similar to a man's belt, tied around the baby's body.

At intervals the mother peeks under the band to see if the cord has dried and fallen off. Ordinarily it does so within 10 days. Should it be oozing, she cleans it and treats it as before. If it does not drop off within another 10 days, a preparation is applied of ashes of wood mixed with scrapings off the smaller end of a corncob. The corncob is dried near the fire until almost scorched. If no corncob is at hand, the powdered scrapings off the edge of a piece of pottery or,

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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Chile

more recently, the powdered scrapings off the broken edge of an iron kettle are used. The ashes must be those of either huique or pelú. Those of pilfü must not be used as they are poisonous. This mixture "certainly dries up that oozing." 844

There is a belief, in all areas, that the umbilical cord should be saved, but the reasons for doing so, and for disposing of it, differ. Quoting an Alepúe mother: "I tied the cord of each of my children, when it fell off, into a little piece of cloth and put it somewhere in the ruka. The most recent ones I kept there [on a nail of a rafter in a corner of the ruka] and there [on a shelf attached to the side of the ruka]. The cord must never be thrown out of the ruka. If it is, the child will always have fear within itself, and that without reason. Without thinking of what I was doing, I threw the cord of one of my daughters out-of-doors after it had been lying on the rafters for a while. Consequently she has always had fear in herself; today, although she is 13 years old, she dislikes going out of the ruka when it is dark." A listening-in woman agreed, and added: "It causes that child to be without courage in general." Another listening-in woman had a hearty laugh when asked where the cords of her children were, and said, "I do not know where they are now; they got lost somewhere in our ruka. I kept them inside the ruka, however." 844 184 [784]

A 60-year-old Coñaripe woman had not heard of the belief of the Alepúe women. She had kept the cords of her children in the ruka because throwing them out indicates to others that the parents do not care what the child will turn out to be.

According to Panguipulli informants, the cord today is thrown into running water, such as a creek or brook. Formerly it was wrapped up in a small piece of cloth and stored under the rafters. Doing this gave the child courage, even the courage to climb tall trees. Informants had not heard of anyone burying a cord, or of undesirable consequences if it were thrown into the fire. "I certainly never heard that throwing it into the fire would make a child poke at fires," a belief held by the Chippewa. When told of the Arapaho custom of sewing the cord into a beaded bag and owning it as an adult, a woman remarked, "Why go through so much trouble and why save those things so long?"

SECUNDINES, PLACENTA, CAUL

After the child is born, the midwife or the mother's mother cleans it, swaddles it in a piece of homewoven woolen cloth, and ties it to its cradle. In the meantime another woman, or the woman's husband, if everyone else is busy, makes the mother gag by pushing two fingers 846

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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heavy objects; either might cause her to abort. Should she happen to see a hunchback, a lame or maimed person, or one with an ugly face or an unusual eye, she was to do no more than glance at him; a prolonged look might cause her child to be deformed in the same manner. "One of my sons was born with only one finger on his right hand; I had looked at a man with such a hand while I was carrying the boy." If a pregnant woman looks at an eclipse through an opening in the roof and simultaneously scratches her body, the child will have a black mark on the corresponding part of its body. "I know a woman who rubbed her eye during an eclipse and thereby caused her child to have a black ring around one eye." Nothing can be done during pregnancy to make a child pretty. "In that respect the child will be born as God wants it to be."

CHILDBIRTH, AND CARE OF MOTHER AND NEWBORN BABY

PLACE OF BIRTH, ATTENDANTS, PERSONS PRESENT, AIDS, PROCEDURE, RECORDING THE BIRTH

The proper place for the birth of a child was the home, that is the toldo, especially in winter. If the birth occurred in the toldo, a corner was curtained off with a blanket, behind which the baby was born. On rare occasions, in summer, birth took place in a shelter erected close to the toldo. An unmarried mother not infrequently delivered her child in an unfrequented place—in a wood, if one was nearby. "Such a woman feared the anger of her father."

There were no professional midwives. The woman's mother assisted with the delivery, unless she was too old or otherwise incapacitated, in which case the woman's mother-in-law, or, occasionally, another woman who was a close relative did so. In dire necessity a man assisted. One man had done so because there was a fiesta going on, to which everyone else had gone. An unmarried mother was assisted "by some woman whose heart moved her to do so, usually a friend."

Persons who were present, but who did not assist, were the woman's husband and her father; sometimes the children of the couple were also present, but just as often they were sent out to play.

In general, women had easy deliveries and took no decoctions to facilitate birth. A 65-year-old woman believed the easy deliveries to be due to a decoction which was given to young girls, "when they were only so tall [about 4 years old]. It was given to them so that they would have no labor pains, once their time came to be mothers." If a woman in labor began to feel weak, "you know it strikes some women in the heart," she was given a stimulating drink made of

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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844 maqui;[3] if she had unusually prolonged pains or a difficult delivery, she was given a decoction of kanchan l'awen (unidentified) and frutilla. One woman had given her daughter (the informant) a nauseating mixture of raw egg and a preparation of toronjil during a difficult delivery. While the toronjil was being boiled in water, the mother peeled the shell off one end of an egg, then poured the boiling toronjil into the shell, and stirred it and the egg until they were well mixed. The daughter drank the mixture directly from the shell. After this the mother poked a tiny hole in one end of another egg and a somewhat larger hole into the opposite end. "I had to blow into the hole," said the daughter, "until I had blown the contents out of the other hole. It took much force, but the baby came almost immediately after I got that done."

844 The woman kneels during delivery, bearing down either by clutching with both hands one of the upright poles that support the roof, or by pulling at a rope that has been attached to a rafter. Births today must be recorded, in accordance with Argentine law.

PREMATURE BIRTHS, STILLBIRTHS

845 Rarely did a premature birth occur. One child, born after a 7-month pregnancy, "did not open its eyes for nearly four weeks, and it could not suckle either; it had to be fed with a spoon."

Stillbirths were a rare event. During my interviews regret was expressed several times regarding two women who had had stillbirths at a First Aid Station conducted by non-Araucanians. Both died while there. "Had these women stayed home, their relatives could have helped them and they might have lived." The informant, 60 years old, then told how a dead fetus was delivered: "If the mother of the woman, or whoever is attending the woman, notices that the child is not living—she will know this because the woman has been in labor a long time and cannot deliver her baby—she waits a little while longer, hoping the woman will, through her own efforts, give birth to the child. When the woman is finally sick unto death, a broad band is tied about her waist: this helps bring the child downward. Long before this, of course, the sac has opened. The mother, or whoever is helping the woman, reaches in with her hand and takes hold of the baby's head or its hair, and pulls the baby from its position. After she has the baby, she pulls at the cord, and in that way removes the

[3] Spanish names of plants are used throughout, unless it was impossible to obtain them, in which case the Araucanian names are used. English names were not obtained. Cf. Appendix B, Plants used by the Araucanians.

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
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placenta, also. And that is what we could have done for these two women, and they might have lived." 845

NAVEL CORD

The attending woman ties off the umbilical cord with a thread and severs the cord beyond this. The navel is given no treatment. Informants agreed that the cord was kept by the mother, after it fell off, but they differed as to its disposal. Some dried the cord thoroughly, then ground it to powder, and gave a little of it in water to the child whenever the child was sick; others merely stored it with other personal things. "But with all the moving around we have had to do since they took our land from us, the ones I kept got lost." A 70-year-old man listened with interest to the Arapaho way of sewing the cord into a beaded bag (Hilger, 1952, pp. 22-23) and remarked, "That was not the custom ever around here." Today, the cord is buried inside the house near the wall. 844 [171]

PLACENTA, CAUL

If the placenta was being ejected with difficulty, the woman was given a decoction of finely powdered root of apio boiled in chicha (fermented fruit juice), or, if no chicha was at hand, in water. In extreme cases she was given her own urine to drink, hoping that gagging would eject the placenta; if this brought no result, gagging was increased by giving her the urine of several persons present. In general, today as formerly, the placenta is buried near the wall within the house or close to the outside of it. In several instances it was known to have been discarded as refuse. [278]

Most informants had not heard of a child born with a caul; several who did were older than 60. They knew that a child so born could be expected to grow up to be an intelligent person. "That is why my son grew up to be so intelligent; but when he is intoxicated he certainly loses his intelligence; he is stupid then." The caul was dried and either stored or buried within the house, very near to the outside of it. "Such a thing you do not throw away; the good fortune of the child depends on it."

STERILIZING THE EYES OF THE NEWBORN BABY

Usually the milk of the baby's mother is dropped into the baby's eyes, "so that it will not have sore eyes." Occasionally today aniline dye is used. 846

11:Faron E-5 (1952-1954)1961 SG4 Araucanians SG4
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593 beliefs of her husband and by extension those of the larger society.
[861] The success with which parents raise their children is judged largely by traditional standards; and to the extent to which they are achieved, the bond between husband and wife draws tighter. It is a minor
[554] prestige-gaining mechanism. The wife attains community respect as she attains position within her household. The pride of a father in his children shows also the feelings for his spouse. A wife basks in this appreciation, cementing the husband-wife relationship.

593 When a child is born, new sets of relationships develop within the
851 family as well as between the parents and the wider social group now standing in cognatic relationship to the infant. These modifications are especially noticeable in the case of a first child. It is not surprising that the birth of a first child is surrounded with a great deal more attention than that of successive children, although it is not implied that considerations of cognatic relationships are primarily responsible for this. However, the father's role at the birth of the first child
[844] differs considerably from that of later offspring, although there is a consistent attitude of joyful expectance, pride, and general satisfaction throughout. A difference is manifest in the man's concern over his wife's condition with the birth of the first child and his initial assumption of the duties of parenthood himself.

844 There is a connection between the concern over a first child and a belief that a new mother requires expert attention at delivery so that the fetus will be able to emerge with its eyes closed. For this reason, the services of a midwife are often obtained. Nowadays, a
756 *machi* (shaman) might be called in to tend the mother, and there
844 seem to be no misgivings about the *machi*'s connections with sorcery
[178] as is implied for the past. In the Roble Huacho region, one of the few *machis* I was able to meet had a reputation as an excellent midwife and general practitioner, and was frequently away from her home overnight practicing her specialty. She was a benign woman, which probably accounts for much of the confidence people had in her. In any case, much of the preparation and activity surrounding the birth of a woman's first child is taken out of her hands and her husband's, and specialized knowledge is generally utilized.

844 Birth takes place at home. The expectant mother is secluded in a section of the house, usually behind some temporary shield such as a straw mat or a suspended blanket. She may be active until heavy labor begins, however. When birth pains start she is usually attended by one or more women, one of whom may be a professional.

11:Faron E-5 (1952-1954)1961 SG4 Araucanians SG4
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The husband has little assistance to lend at this time, and may even be told to leave the house during parturition. If there are children present, they will be chased out of the house. Only if labor is very difficult will the husband be asked to assist, usually by pressing on his wife's abdomen to force the birth. It also happens that an older, more experienced relative might be called upon to do this. In any event, there is a tense atmosphere, especially during a difficult birth. The woman is the focus of attention and the delivery is surrounded by secrecy. The father's interest in both wife and child is heightened. The woman proves herself to the community and both she and her husband exude feelings of warmth, pride, and self-congratulation. To a large extent these are shared by other residents who visit the mother and view the child during the next few weeks. Gifts are invariably brought, and in being reciprocated establish informal bonds of friendship which might not have existed before the birth of the child.

The husband's major participation is in burying the afterbirth, a traditional obligation. He must scrape up all the residue and the blanket or sheepskin used in the accouchement, disposing of them some distance from the *ruka*. Methods of disposal vary. Where fear of witchcraft is especially strong, however, disposal is more guarded and elaborately conceived. The husband might take the afterbirth to a deserted and unfrequented spot in the woods, swamp, hilltop, or other out-of-the-way place to bury it along with the bedding and soiled garments. Sometimes the afterbirth is thrown into a stream and the garments washed and reused. Since this duty devolves upon the husband, it is primarily the extent to which he is concerned with witchcraft that seems to determine how the matter is disposed of. In describing their role on these occasions, some men maintain that they have really broken with tradition and no longer fear the machinations of sorcerers, but have to comply with traditional concepts of disposal of the afterbirth so as not to arouse too great anxiety among the more conservative members of their family and kingroup.

Soon after birth the parents name the child without ceremony. Boys ideally receive another name when they are about five years old. This is ceremonially bestowed, in a simple ritual called *lakutun*, since the name is bestowed by the paternal grandfather or someone who stands in his place – that is, another elder of the lineage. The naming ceremony involves a feast and drinking bout to which relatives and friends are invited. The naming day is celebrated annually.

12: Faron E-4, 5 (1952-1954) 1964
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machi. The latter is often called upon to assist at difficult births, if she is known to be especially skilled at delivery. In this role, the performance is not essentially magical, although an initial incantation is made to insure success. The *machi* is called in on these occasions to provide practical knowledge in delivery—infusion of herbs, massage, and so forth. As her reputation grows so does her clientele.

Illness is attributed to the persistence of evil forces, since the *wekufe* are always with one in any case; thus when recovery is delayed and death seems to threaten, a *machi* is called in. The young man who had the operation on his head had gone to see a Chilean doctor in town, but when his headaches and nausea did not ease he consulted the blind *machi*, whom he was certain would at least deal with the *wekufe* even though success was not assured. Their indifference to Mapuche notions of illness and their obvious inability to deal with the forces of evil have worked against Chilean doctors' influence in Mapucheland.

Supernaturally induced, illness may come from intrusion into the person of some malignant quality or object. These intrusions are associated with certain signs or symptoms, which, if not already apparent to the patient, are revealed to him by the *machi*. Dreams, omens, contacts with *witranalwe*, and so forth, all may give rise to illness. Examples of bad omens are the following: the death of a tree in an orchard, a tree flowering after bearing fruit, one's falling down and sitting on the ground, evidence of dampness under the bed, a hen crowing like a cock, and all the evidence for the presence of forces of evil mentioned already. In dreams, having one's hair cut is a sign of poverty and hardship. Being shaven, walking barefoot, falling from a tree, having teeth pulled, being arrested by the police—all these dreams presage sickness of one kind or another. These dreams are discussed by the people, and the discussion either serves to dispel fear or reinforce it to such an extent that the person becomes worried enough to consult a *machi*. Since shamanistic curing is always costly, it is not a thing which is undertaken lightly. Then, too, *machi* are not visited professionally without good reason, for they are somewhat feared. The *machi* will clarify dreams or omens and recommend herbal remedies. This is about the simplest curing technique and involves no magical

[1.e. the machi -- Analyst]